I'm sure I'm not the only one who feels Apple's quality is degrading. I spend 10 hours a day on my laptop and would spend any amount of money within reason for a better one. However, everything comes with tradeoffs.

My dream laptop is simple, a MacBook with Linux, supported by a company that is user aligned.

The first idea is simple, put Linux on a MacBook.

Asahi Linux is a good idea, however, it won't ever be good. Apple is putting more and more stuff into closed source microcontrollers that have no documentation. Like jailbreaking, it may start off strong when people are excited, but support for the next generation and that last bit of polish won't ever get there.

While it got some impressive stuff like psychoacoustic bass (works on other machines too, I installed this on my ZBook), it lacks DP Alt Mode, meaning you can't plug in a USB-C monitor. I don't fault the Asahi people, Apple uses custom undocumented hardware to manage the USB ports, and reversing muxes seems boring.

Additionally, like on almost all Linux laptops, the power management is bad. And even worse, there's 0 documentation from Apple on how to fix it, so despite it being super good on macOS, it's one of the more annoying laptops to try to fix on Linux. At least if you have a laptop with AMD or Intel there's some docs on power states.

So with Apple out, we have to look for alternatives. I like so much about Framework as a company, straightforward, open source ethos, but they aren't building the product I want.

I don't care one bit about upgradability or customizability. After a year or two, I'm happy to throw it out and buy a new one. It's not like upgradability is a bad thing, but it usually comes with tradeoffs to weight and power draw, and I'd rather it all be in one solid package glued together. And I don't like customizability because I like when all the testing and polish work is put into one configuration.

Perhaps the Framework 16 will impress me; I shouldn't judge until I use it. But I see things like a request for a touchpad single unit so there's not some random pieces of plastic digging into my wrist just in case I want to move my touchpad left or right. And I read some complaints about the rigidity, how can it be rigid if the modules are attached with magnets? Engineering is all about trade-offs, and the trade-off I'd prefer is 0 upgradability or customizability in exchange for less weight and more polish.

The Framework 16 also has a Strix Point instead of a Strix Halo, and I hear the power draw isn't too much better on Point. Coming from an M3 Max, the Strix Halo is just *barely* acceptable performance wise, I also own an Intel Core 7 155H and AMD Hawk Point. Those are not what I consider okay in a laptop.

I'm typing this blog on a HP ZBook Ultra G1a 14. Question to HP, who names this crap? Why do these companies insist on having the most confusing product lineups and names.

Are ZBooks good or do I want an OmniBook or ProBook? Within ZBook, is Ultra or Fury better? Do I want a G1a or a G1i? Oh you sell ZBook Firefly G11, I liked that TV show, is that one good?

Wait wait wait OMEN MAX 16z-ak000 has a lot of capital letters, that one must be the best, right? But there's also an HP EliteBook, Elite sounds like the best, do I still want a ZBook?

These are all real products on HP's laptop page.

Consumer electronics naming is very simple. Make a good product with a simple name. "iPhone", "comma", "Z Fold". Then every year or two, add one to the number of that product. If it's a small refresh, you can add a letter after the number. "2 3 3X 4" "4 4s 5 5s 6 …" "2 3 4 5 6 7"

Why is this so hard for companies like HP?

If I made a laptop, it would come in one configuration. Call it the **hackbook**

Highest end Strix Halo part, which is the best mobile(ish) chip you can get outside Apple. 16 core Zen 5 CPU, 40 core RDNA